

A DICTIONARY AND GLOSSARY OF THE KORAN



JOHN PENRICE

سِلْكُ ٱلْبَيَانِ فِي مَنَاقِبِ ٱلْقُرْآنِ

A

DICTIONARY AND GLOSSARY

OF

THE KOR-ÂN,

WITH

COPIOUS GRAMMATICAL REFERENCES AND EXPLANATIONS OF THE TEXT.

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سلك البيان
في
مناقب القرآن

PREFACE.

THAT a competent knowledge of the Ḳor-ân is indispensable as an introduction to the study of Arabic literature will be admitted by all who have advanced beyond the rudiments of the language. From the purity of its style and elegance of its diction it has come to be considered as the standard of Arabic even by those who have no belief in its pretensions to a divine origin, while so great is its authority among the followers of Moḥammad, that it would be difficult to name a work by any Mussulman writer which does not abound in allusions to its precepts or in quotations from its pages.

It is not to be expected that all the transcendant excellencies and miraculous beauties discovered in the Ḳor-ân by its commentators and others should immediately unveil themselves to our cold and unsympathizing gaze; beauties there are, many and great; ideas highly poetical are clothed in rich and appropriate language, which not unfrequently rises to a sublimity far beyond the reach of any translation; but it is unfortunately the case that many of those graces which present themselves to the admiration of the finished scholar are but so many stumbling-blocks in the way of the beginner; the marvellous conciseness which adds so greatly to the force and energy of its expressions cannot fail to perplex him, while the frequent use of the ellipse leaves in his mind a feeling of vagueness not altogether out of character in a work of its oracular and *soi-disant* prophetic nature.

It has been the privilege of the Ḳor-ân rather to impose its own laws upon grammar than to accept them from other sources; and as it was written originally without vowel points, it is not surprising that a good deal of difficulty has been experienced in framing rules to meet the various readings that have thence crept in.

The following pages have been compiled in the hope that they may prove of service to the beginner in mastering some of the difficulties to which I have referred; they will be found to contain much, which to the more advanced student may appear trivial or unnecessary, but which will not be without value if it lighten the labours of those for whose use the book is principally designed; it has no claim to originality, it merely presents to the reader in a succinct form that which the writer has culled for his benefit from the works of others.

The edition of the Ḳor-ân which I have chosen for my text is that by Fluegel, printed at Leipzig in 1834; the Concordance by the same author has been my sheet-anchor throughout. Each word will be found under its verbal root; where none exists it must be looked for in its alphabetical place; so also in the case of

words which have seemed likely to puzzle the beginner; many of these have been separately arranged in their alphabetical order, but withdrawn a little within the marginal line; thus for example the word كَهَيْئَةِ may be looked for either under كَ or under its root هَاءَ. The vowel of the aorist has been given where it is known; I have generally added the *original* meaning, and where such meaning is not to be found in the Ḳor-ân the words are printed in Italics. I must here claim indulgence for the fault—if fault it be—of having given the English of the infinitive instead of the third person singular of the preterite, or grammatical root of the verb; it seems more convenient and less roundabout to say that ضَرَبَ means to strike, although no one would be likely to commence the study of the Ḳor-ân without being fully aware that the word should in strictness be rendered "He struck"; while upon this point I may observe that although there is no true infinitive in Arabic, the abstract noun or noun of action frequently supplies its place; the letters n.a. merely refer to the forms of the different nouns of action, not necessarily to their meaning; this also applies to the participles, written part. act. and pass.; these names have been retained for convenience sake, and mark the *form only* of the verbal adjectives, which, being constantly employed as substantives, are generally so rendered.

It is hardly necessary that I should offer any apology to my readers for the frequent references I have made to De Sacy's Grammaire Arabe; the study of the French language is now so universal, as almost to render a translation superfluous; the letters D. S. Gr. etc. refer to the second edition.

I have not, as a rule, thought it necessary to notice the various readings of disputed passages, nor the numerous interpretations of the same passage which abound in the Commentaries; those who may wish to extend their researches in this direction will find an ample field in the works of the two great authorities El Beiḍâwëe and Ez-Zamakhsharëe; the Commentary of the former, as being the more grammatical, is the one I have generally consulted. Free use has been made of the Dictionaries of Freytag and Johnson, principally the former; to them, as well as to Sale's well-known translation, my acknowledgments are especially due.

From the many careful revisions the work has undergone, both previously, and also in passing through the press, I have good grounds for hoping that but few typographical errors have escaped detection; entire freedom from such is hardly to be expected, but the short table of errata will, I feel confident, comprise the greater part; for all other shortcomings I must seek the indulgence of my readers, trusting that my humble efforts may have provided for them in the words of my title "A clue of elucidation to the intricate passages of the Ḳor-ân."

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J. PENRICE.